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May 21, 1953

Dear Dick:

Ever so many thanks for your nice letter of the 20th enclosing a memorandum regarding your trip to Central America. Your comments in practically every respect are closely parallel to my own observations during my trip. The situation in Guatemala is certainly serious and yet it is difficult to see what course of action we can adopt which is reasonably safe and likely to produce results. We are continually at work on this problem.

You may be interested to know that in my conversation with Arbenz I did my best to convince him that he must choose which of the courses he was going to follow - that of cooperation with communism or that of cooperation with the United States. I do not think that he is willing to abandon the idea of cooperation with the United States and yet I am convinced that he is not prepared to abandon cooperation with communism; in other words, he won't face the issue. You may also be interested to know that I sat next to Colonel Diaz at dinner and that he jumped me, as he did you, about the ammunition. He got no encouragement so long as Guatemala continues to cooperate with the communists.

With every good wish,

Very sincerely yours,

John M. Cabot

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